(a) whether it is a fact that Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) have observed that recently notified new industry-friendly Environment impact Assessment (EIA) guidelines do not meet the expectation of the industry;

(b) if so, whether any consultations have been held with the CII and his Ministry to sort out the points of difference and evolving modalities for convergence for arriving at agreed solutions; and

(c) the changes made or likely to be made after these discussions with CII and other similar bodies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) to (c) No, Sir. The Government is not aware of any such observations by the Confederation of Indian Industries (CII). However, CII alongwith all other concerned stakeholders were duly consulted before finalization of the Environment Impact Assessment Notification issued on 14th September, 2006.

Diminishing dense forests in Assam

1094. SHRIMATI SYEDA ANWARA TAIMUR:
SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that Forest Survey of India have found 12,833 sq. km. of very dense forests in Assam having been wiped out during the last five years;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and whether Government have fixed any responsibility on the authorities who are deployed to look after and preserve the forests wealth of the country; and

(c) whether Government are also aware that numerous saw mills and plywood industries are using illegal felling of the trees as their raw material in spite of the fact that the Hon'ble Supreme Court in December 1996 had banned felling of trees?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The Forest

Cover of Assam has not shown a decrease of 12,833 sq. km. of very dense forests in the last five years. However, there has been a slight decrease in the dense forest area between 1999 and 2003 assessments (State of Forest Report) while at the same time, open forests has increased by 4,613 sq. km. thus resulting in a net increase in forest cover of 3,138 sq. km.

(c) The Hon'ble Supreme Court *vide* its orders dated 29.10.2002 in WP (C) 202/1995 has directed that no State or Union Territory shall permit any unlicensed saw-mills, veneer, plywood industry to operate and they are directed to close all such unlicensed unit forthwith. No State Government or Union Territory will permit the opening of any saw-mills, veneer or plywood industry without prior permission of the Central empowered Committee. The Chief Secretary of each State will ensure strict compliance of this direction. There shall also be no relaxation of rules with regard to the grant to license without previous concurrence of the Central Empowered Committee.

Pursuant to these orders, no case from Assam regarding the violation of the above directions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court has come to the notice of Central Government.

Moreover, as per the directions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court, *vide* its order dated 4.3.1997, a High Power Committee has been constituted to oversee the strict and faithful implementation of the orders of the Court in the Noth Eastern region, including Assam.

Insurance cover for damage caused by wild animals

†1095. SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state

(a) whether any proposal is under consideration to provide insurance cover for the damage caused by wild animals;

(b) if so, since when the proposal is under consideration;

(c) whether this would be implemented all over the country in a uniform manner; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.